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WORKERS' MONTHLY EARNINGS INCREASE;
COST OF LIVING DOWN

According to data from the Institute of National Economy, the average monthly earnings of workers in state enterprises in December 1948 were 16,035 zlotys. In January 1949 wages increased by 10 percent, making the average monthly income 17,638 zlotys during 1949. The average hourly rates in the mining industry during early 1949 were: January 85.86 zlotys, February 90.34 zlotys, March 95.77 zlotys. The average monthly earnings of a miner from January to March were 17,787 zlotys. Therefore, it is proper to figure the average monthly earnings per worker as 17,700 zlotys.

According to data from the Main Statistical Office, the 1939 average weekly earnings of workers, based on the statistics of the Social Insurance Enterprises, were 23.9 zlotys. On the monthly basis, using 27 work days, it amounted to 108 zlotys. A typical proper diet for a worker and his family was as follows (in percentages): food 63.8, alcohol and tobacco 2.4, rent 6.4, household equipment 1.9, fuel and lighting 4.5, personal care and health 1.5, clothing, shoes, and linen 10.9, culture and education 3.6, insurance and taxes 3.0, miscellaneous expenses 1.3, and savings and repayment of loans 0.7.

The prewar family consumption of food per year was as follows: bread 152 kilograms, rolls, etc., 11.3 kilograms, flour 20.9 kilograms, coffee and rice 8 kilograms, peas and beans 3.6 kilograms, potatoes 190.6 kilograms, vegetables 51.3 kilograms, milk 64.8 liters, butter 2 kilograms, cheese 0.4 kilograms, cream 1.5 liters, 38.9 eggs, smoked meats and fish 30.7 kilograms; other fats, excluding butter, 9.5 kilograms; fruits and fruit products 4 kilograms.

"At present, 45.8 percent of the monthly earnings of 17,700 aletys is spent for food.

The majority of workers live in old houses, therefore the rents are at prewar level. Besides the rent, the tenants, now make various additional payments which, prior to the war, were borne by homeowners. These additional payments do not surpass 300 percent of the rents. Workers living in new houses built by state funds pay higher rents than in prewar times for the same type of housing but pay

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far less rent than in newly built private homes. According to prewar statistics, rent took 6.4 percent of the budget, or 7 zlotys of the average monthly income of 108 zlotys. At present, rent is approximately 35 zlotys, or 0.19 percent of the worker's average monthly income.

Today one kilowatt of electric power in Warsaw costs 19 times more than in prewar times; the cost of one cubic meter of gas is 43 times more; and one kilogram of coal, 66 times more. Considering the cost-of-living indexes of a worker's family issued by the Main Statistical Office, fuel and lighting has increased 45 times. Before the war, the cost of fuel and lighting was 4.9 zlotys per month, or 4.5 percent of the workers' budget. Multiplying these figures by 45, we get 220 zlotys, or 1.2 percent of the monthly earnings. The prewar percentage was 4.5.

Clothing and footwear present another picture. The purchase price of these articles is 265 times greater than it was in prewar times. Prior to the war, the worker paid 11.7 zlotys, or 10.9 percent of his monthly earnings for clothing and footwear. At present, he must pay 3,100 zlotys, 11.7 zlotys times 265, or 17.5 percent of his monthly income.

The four largest expenditures in the worker's budget--food, rent, fuel and light, and clothing and footwear--amount to approximately 65 percent of his total monthly expenses, or 20 percent less than prior to the war. This does not mean that expenditures for other needs such as culture, medical care, household equipment, etc., have increased. It means that the amount spent for food by the worker has been increased, which means that he and his family are better fed. The great demand for necessities other than food is indicated by the high price index of 160 times prewar for the entire category, whereas food prices are only approximately 120 times prewar. With free public services to workers, such as medical aid and education, etc., there has been a reduction for such items in individual budgets.

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